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DEPT FOR NEA/ARPI AND IO/UNP

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TAGS: PREL AORC KU IT UNSC

SUBJECT: ITALIANS SEEKING GCC SUPPORT ON UNSC REFORM

Classified By: CDA Matthew H. Tueller for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

**¶1.** (C) In a November 20 courtesy call on Emboffs, Nico Frandi (protect), 2nd Secretary of the Italian Embassy, spoke at length on Italy's views on UN Security Council reform. He said his government was dismayed there was no common European position on reform and, as a result, decided to approach member states to advance its vision of the future structure of the UNSC. The Italian Ambassador is seeking an appointment with Kuwaiti Prime Minister Shaykh Sabah Al-Ahmed Al-Jabir Al-Sabah in hopes of securing GCC support for the Italian position. There are no current plans for GOI demarches on other GCC capitals. The Italian proposal (provided below) does not affect the P-5, encourages continued geographic balance, and has a goal of establishing regional seats, such as an eventual chair for the EU. Frandi shared the paper with post as a courtesy and commented the GOI knows its stance will anger some of its neighbors, most notably, Germany.

**¶2.** (C) Begin Text of Italian Non Paper on Security Council Reform

The starting point for UN reform in the field of peace and security is a review of the Organization's policies. The question of the Security Council role, functioning and composition should be addressed within a comprehensive reform framework on which to build consensus within the General Assembly.

Italy is fully engaged in the debate on UN reform; with its EU partners, Italy has provided a contribution to the High Level Panel appointed by the Secretary General and is looking forward to its proposals in December. Italy has also presented to the Panel a national contribution on Security Council reform, an issue on which there is no E.U. common position.

The recent General Assembly debate has demonstrated that no agreement has yet been reached on SC reform. This should not deter us from seeking solutions that are not divisive. Any decision imposed through a narrow majority vote would seriously undermine the credibility of the Council. Confronted with global challenges of great magnitude, the international community cannot afford profound divisions with lasting consequences within its ranks and within regional groups.

Italy is in favor of a Security Council reform inspired by the principles of greater accountability, effectiveness, democratic participation and geographic representation. We are firmly convinced that the best way to pursue such a reform is through the establishment of new elective, non permanent seats for member States.

This would facilitate -- in the first place -- wider participation of the increased membership to the Council and rebalance its geographic composition, by giving developing countries an enhanced presence.

Furthermore, by increasing the democratic and accountable character of the Council, the political legitimacy of its decision will be increased.

Last but not least, any reform should not impair, but rather strengthen the effectiveness of the Council's action.

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Why We are Against the Creation of New Permanent Members  
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Italy does not believe that the Council's difficulties can be resolved through new permanent, irrevocable appointments and national mandates. Such a move would sow division, frustration, and perhaps disengagement among the membership.

These are the reasons for our opposition to new permanent members:

**¶1.** the absence of regular political scrutiny and accountability through elections to wider sections of the

membership would diminish the Council's political legitimacy;

12. the decision making process would be further hindered;

13. more privileged positions would be created, thereby further eroding the principle of sovereign equality and damaging the democratic process at the UN;

14. the elected non permanent members of the Council would be further marginalized, thereby deepening division within the membership and undermining the Council's credibility;

15. by freezing permanently some of the Council's seats, the possibility for a more fair and equitable representation on the Security Council for the rest of the UN membership would be substantially reduced or denied;

16. should the new permanent members be endowed with the veto right, this would run counter to the member States overwhelming position which is in favor of reducing, not expanding such a right. Should they be deprived of the veto, a new category of UN membership would be introduced;

17. tensions would be perpetuated in each regional group, where opposition persists against elevating individual states to the status of permanent member;

18. such a reform would make the UN a more hierarchical and less democratic organization, by giving a few countries (maybe 10 or 11 out of 191) the exclusive right to decide, through their overwhelming influence in the Council and without any accountability, when the resort to force in international relations is legitimate;

19. the increase in the permanent members would make more difficult any further Council reform in the future, as the permanent members -- old and new -- would have a stake in preventing changes which might affect their status and interests.

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Italy's Proposals: A) Longer Terms or More Frequent Rotation for Elected Members

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Should the High Level Panel advance such a proposal, and if a broad consensus emerges, we are willing to contemplate and support more frequent rotation or longer terms in the Security Council for countries that make a greater contribution to the purposes of the United Nations.

In any case, this solution should retain the fundamental principle of elections and ensure a larger presence of the developing countries. Account should be taken of the stipulation in Article 23 of the Charter that "due regard being especially paid, in the first instance to the contribution of Members of the United Nations to the maintenance of international peace and security and to the other purposes of the Organization, and also to equitable geographic distribution."

Under this proposal, elective seats with a longer duration or more frequent rotation would be established in a non discriminatory manner for all regional groups.

At the same time, the Charter provision prohibiting immediate re-election of SC non permanent members could be eliminated.

In any case, this solution should rule out the creation of permanent seats for single states and should preserve the electoral process, as the foundation of representativeness, accountability and legitimacy.

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Italy's Proposals: B) Non Permanent Seats for all Regional Groups

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Should the UN membership be unable to reach a consensus on a Security Council reform along the lines proposed in section A), Italy believes that the only realistic compromise solution for the time being would be a limited increase of the non permanent seats (in line with the "fall-back position" of the Non-Aligned Movement.)

This solution would reflect the enlarged U.S. membership and, by increasing the number of available elective seats, would facilitate the access of all member States to the Council.

An increase of non permanent seats could be accompanied by a review-clause, i.e. an understanding that within a given number of years (10 or 15) the member states would return to this issue to seek a new agreement in light of the evolving trends in the international community.

Finally, also in this solution the current Charter provision prohibiting immediate re-electon of SC non-permanent members could be eliminated.

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**Italy's Proposals: The Regional Dimension**

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The increasing role of regional organizations is of paramount importance among current international trends. Italy is convinced that the UN will soon have to consider -- through an innovative approach -- how to involve these organizations in the Council's decision making processes.

In the framework of the options outlined in Sections A) and B) above, we are ready to study solutions aimed at strengthening the links between elected members of the Council and the regional groups and/or regional organizations to which they belong, though mechanisms providing for greater accountability towards these entities. Seats permanently allocated to individual regions could be taken into consideration.

Furthermore, the possibility of a future seat for the European Union, though not immediate, remains an objective of Italy's foreign policy and would strengthen the contribution that the EU can provide to the United Nations.

We will continue to work to make conditions come about for this objective to become truly concrete and real. In the meantime, we should avoid decisions -- such as new permanent seats for one or the other member state -- which would jeopardize this objective, and should work to strengthen the role of the EU and its member States in the Security Council.  
Tueller